Is Art of Acting Inherited or Acquired?

John Drew and Seven Other American Stage Stars Trace Ancestry Directly to Eliza Lane, Famed in Early United States Stage History.

Are actors born, or are they masters of their own destiny? Do the most successful stars inherit the ability to act from some ancestor, or can they act well only after learning how by deep study and application?

In looking over the list of famous American actors such names as Booth, Boucicault, Jefferson, Sothern, Hackett, Holland and Drew stand out prominently. We find there were several of each. These families seemed to be acting families. In some of these families ancestors running back for centuries are found to have been stage folk.

Of course there are many stage stars who have lasted for years whose ancestors never went near the theater. Like the Lincolns, we find their ancestors coming from humble cabin abodes. But, like Abraham Lincoln, we can trace their ancestry back through several generations and find great-grandfathers who lived in prosperity. It is commonly said that Julia Marlowe, the wife of E. H. Sothern, had no theatrical ancestry. She rose to front rank through her own efforts and diligence.

Yet in looking over her family tree genealogists declare they have found actors in her ancestral line.

Sothern's father was a famous actor. But none of the other American stage families have given so many distinguished actors to the theater as the family which had its histrionic beginnings back in the last year of the eighteenth century, when Eliza Lane was born.

Eliza Lane is not a name to conjure with today, but she was accounted one of the best singing comediennes in England, when, in 1827, she came to this country, bringing with her a little girl of only 7, who was destined to become in time one of the foremost actresses on the English speaking stage and America's first actress manager.

Two years later little Louise Lane's arrival in this country she was playing in comedy and burlettas at the Chestnut Street Theater, Philadelphia. Ten years later, when only 19 years old, she was playing such important roles as Beatrice and Ophelia, and in 1839 and 1840 Lady Macbeth and Desdemona with Edwin Forrest, receiving for this work the princely salary of $20 a week, considered remarkable at that time for one so young.

In 1849 she met and married John Drew, the first comedian of that name, at that time becoming very popular as an actor of Irish parts. Mr. Drew was a native of Dublin, Ireland, and had come to this country when only 6 years old. After an adventurous career he drifted to the stage and made an instantaneops hit as a player of romantic Irish types.

JOHN DREW'S PARENTS ON STAGE.

After their marriage Mr. and Mrs. Drew acted throughout the country in a series of comedies, and in 1853 they established themselves at the old Arch Street Theater, Philadelphia, where for several years they played all the old comedies with a company which included among its members Frank Drew, a brother of John Drew, and an actor of much ability.

In 1857 John Drew withdrew temporarily from the company and made a world wide tour. In 1861, just prior to his return, Mrs. Drew assumed the entire management of the Arch Street Theatre and began a tenancy which lasted for thirty years. During the following eighteen years the house became famous, not only in this country, but abroad, as the home comedy.

Some of the greatest players on this side of the Atlantic, including Edwin Booth, Lester Wallack, Charlotte Cushman, E. L. Davenport, Louis James, Stuart Robson and Lotta, appeared at the Arch Street Theater in rapid succession, supported by the regular stock organization.

Mrs. Drew continued the stock company until 1878, when she changed her policy and gave way to traveling "combinations." In 1880 she became associated with Joseph Jefferson, still retaining the lease of the Arch, which she did not relinquish until 1892. She died in 1897.

The most distinguished member of the Drew family now living is her son, John Drew, one of the foremost comedians of this country. He was born in Philadelphia, and it was at the old Arch in 1872 that he made his first appearance on the stage in "Cool as a Cucumber." For eight years he continued as a member of his mother's company and appeared in the support of a number of leading players, including Edwin Booth. In 1880 he became leading man of Augustin Daly's famous company, a position which he held for twelve years, in the course of which time he played more than fifty roles in that manager's revivals of the Shakespearean comedies and adaptations of light foreign pieces. He also played London seasons with the organization in 1884, 1888 and 1890.

Charles Frohman launched him as a star in 1892 and he is now beyond a doubt the most distinguished player at present acting on the American stage.

But Mr. Drew is not the only member of this famous family who is a star. Two others share that distinguished privilege. They are

"BORN" ACTOR PERFORMS IN PULPIT.

Frequently "born" actors find themselves in another line of work. One of these is the Rev. T. Kempton, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Cambridge, Mass. The Rev. Mr. Kempton acts in the pulpit to illustrate his sermons.

Like many another pastor, he spent much time trying to solve the problem why his Sunday night services were so slimly attended, while the theaters with their "sacred concerts" were well filled.

Now the people are turned away from the church for lack of room, and extra seats are placed in every available space.

"We have had enough of these sermons to demonstrate their value," said Mr. Kempton, in explaining his work. "I am convinced that great benefits may be derived from this form of service."

One of the best of the drama sermons that Mr. Kempton has produced thus far is "The Night the Captain Kept the Ship Off the Rocks."

In his drama sermons, Mr. Kempton impersonates all the chearacters. The captain of the ship is first seen entering his cabin with a bundle of ship's papers in his hand, which he places on a table. He then talks with the pilot about the many voyages he has taken without an accident. But he realizes the responsibility placed upon him, and makes clear that only by the most urgent care and a trust in God will he be able to bring the ship to harbor.

A fire is discovered in the coal bunkers. Captain Vance, calm in the presence of danger, directs how the fire shall be fought and the blaze is speedily subdued.

To make the scene more realistic red fire is seen blazing when Mr. Kempton reaches this stage of the sermon.

The ship changes her course, runs out to the open sea, with apparently a quiet trip ahead, when the wireless is heard, bringing its S. O. S. signal over the ether waves.

Here Mr. Kempton utilizes a genuine wireless instrument and an expert operator sends the message.

Captain Vance directs that his ship be rushed to the aid of the sinking vessel. Life preservers are thrown to those afloat in the water, and they are pulled on board to safety.

After the rescue is complete the captain thanks God. A large anchor, outlined with incandescent lights, is seen on the back of the church, and a quartette sings "Will Your Anchor Hold in the Storms of Life?"

The lights are turned up, the powerful spotlight darkened, and in place of the captain's room on the ship a minister in conventional garb walks across to the pulpit and pronounces the benediction.

In order that the acting will be true to life, he takes regular lessons in the dramatic art from one of the best known teachers in Greater Boston.

UPPER left—John Drew in "The Will." Upper right—Julia Marlowe as Viola. Lower row, from left to right—John Drew, as Sir Phillip Ross; Ethel Barrymore and E. H. Sothern.

LEGISLATIVE OFFICES FOR PARENTS ONLY

Those not the parents of children are not properly qualified to make laws for the people of Kansas.

This is the statement of Mrs. Lillian Mitchner, president of the Kansas Women's Christian Temperance Union, as the attitude of the members of that society towards candidates for the Legislature. And the attitude of the organization, long counted important by Kansas politicians, is doubly so now that women can vote. The society has 10,000 members in this State. And they have long worked together in securing the things they wanted. Before Kansas women received suffrage the union had a way of making itself felt that caused its protests to be heeded while those of other women's societies were politely ignored.

And to be an ideal lawmaker one should be over 40 years old, and a woman, Mrs. Mitchner declares.

"These women (mothers and over 40 years old), understand better what is needed," Mrs. Mitchner says. An added recommendation will be the fact that they have taken some interest in politics, township, city or State, in the past.

The rustle of the skirt is already being heard in Kansas politics. Mrs. Mitchner announces that her society expects to have several candidates for Legislature in the field. She will take the stump in favor of some of them. The efforts of the W. C. T. U. will be directed toward this branch of government, leaving others to other women's organizations. And other organizations have signified that they will be in the campaign with all the strength they can muster. Among them are the Good Citizenship League, the Women's Legislative League, the Good Government Clubs, and the Women's Federation of clubs.

With the announcement that the women will have several candidates in the field for the Legislature added interest comes to the Kansas Senatorial situation. Already former Senator Charles Curtis has announced himself a candidate for the Republican nomination and reelection. Likewise Senator Joseph L. Bristow will be a candidate. Maj. A. M. Harvey, one of the first Kansas politicians to declare himself for woman's suffrage, announced himself a candidate last fall. He insists he will stay in the race and fight hard for the office. Whether Bristow and Curtis have enough personal following among the women to overcome the liking for Harvey because of his fight to secure the ballot for women is a question and how the women feel towards the present Senator or the former one no one seems to know. That the fight between Bristow and Curtis will be bitter all admit. The dislike of the two men for each other is intense and dates back to before the time Curtis was defeated for the Senate by Senator Long.

The women announce they will not be partisan candidates, and so far have managed to avoid tying up with either of the political parties. How will the women members of the Legislature, provided they are elected, vote, when the time comes to name a Senator?

There are a hundred questions that the entrance of women into politics have brought up. And so far the politicians have answered few of them to their own satisfaction.

Food Spoiled in Kitchen.

"We have the most abundant and palatable food in the world, and yet spoil more of it in the kitchen than any other country, or all other countries."

So says Dr. Harvey W. Wiley, the pure food expert.

Exempting his own wife, whom he said he "acquired late in life," he declared that American women, as a whole, are "the worst cooks in the world."

"Good food and good cooking are preventives of divorce, asserted Dr. Wiley. Last summer he sampled the menu of French peasants, and from that experience was borne this question.

"Who ever heard of divorce in rural France?"

"You can no more drive a man away from a good table than you can a cat," he continued, "and if you do, he will come back. The way to keep husbands at home is to feed them well.

"Old age is the only disease a respectable person ever should die of. The average life in this country today is 44 years. There is no reason why it shouldn't be 88. If we would go back to the simple life, we could all live much longer than we're going to."

Dr. Wiley advocated the removal of manufacturing plants from cities to rural districts as the best solution of the problem of urban congestion. If this were done, he thinks, the cost of living would not soar so high, for the lessened congestion would help solve the question of distribution of the country's abundant food supply and thus bring down prices.

BRITISH MAGAZINE DISCUSSES OWNERSHIP OF LOST GOLF BALL

Nothing is too serious for a weighty British magazine to discuss at length, and "The Lost Golf Ball" finds a natural place among other imperial problems in The Cornhill. Is finding keeping? Or do subtler legal doctrines control? The learned judge who writes upon the question begins with the touching truism that whatever ownership there is in golf balls is necessarily of a fleeting and precarious nature. Indeed, yes! But, further, are they ferae naturae, akin to beasts and birds, such as hares, foxes and wild geese, in which the law recognizes no private ownership? No, asserts the judge. The ball may be under your control only for the moments that it is on the tee.

A second later it may be swimming with the tide in a brook or perched in the crotch of a tree—or in a caddy's pocket. But the ball is not and never was wild by nature and was your docile property until you tried to hit it. Then follow such striking consequences as these: That a golf ball, even though lost, is still the property of the owner, and that the owner can have an action of trover for its conversion—if he can identify it!

Which is like most law in the eyes of the layman. As if, even supposing that one got the chance, one could identify one's own nicks and slashes from anybody else's—or would care to! No. We are glad to present the truth, but it seems to us the coldest sort of comfort to assure the duffer that he still owns the millions of balls that he has sliced and pulled and topped into next week, never to look upon their forms again.

An old nigger had been in trouble for stealing chickens, and was convicted on circumstantial evidence.

"What's circumstantial evidence?" he was asked.

"Well," he said, "as near as I kin splain it, fum de way it has been splained to me, circumstantial evidence is de feathers dat you leaves lyin' around after you has done with de chicken."